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ABSTRACT

The manual offers criteria as guidelines in determining pupil eligibility for speech and language services in New Jersey. Criteria were originally developed by a task force of speech-language specialists and special education administrators, were then reviewed by public school speech-language specialists, and were subsequently revised. Criteria are set forth for stuttering, voice disorders, articulation disorders, and language disorders. Caseload size ranges have also been included (on a continuum from 25 up to 65). These ranges suggest factors that should be considered when determining caseload size and should be used in conjunction with the eligibility criteria. (CL)

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DOCUMENT

Speech-Language Services

GUIDELINES: Eligibility Criteria Caseload Continuum

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NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Guidelines: Eligibility Criteria
Caseload Continuum

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Attached is a set of criteria to serve as guidelines for the speech-language specialist in determining the pupil eligibility for speech and language services. Criteria are included for the areas of articulation, voice, language, and fluency.

The project to develop these criteria reflects a state as well as national concern with caseload selection for services. It is hoped that the use of these criteria will facilitate consistency in the provision of speech and language services both within a district and throughout the state. These criteria are not intended to be used in place of ones that are specifically developed to meet the unique needs of a special population.

This document is a result of the efforts of many professionals. Initially, criteria were developed by a task force composed of speech-language specialists and directors of special education from a number of districts. The criteria then were sent to public school speech-language specialists throughout the state for their comments, criticisms, and suggestions. The responses were analyzed and incorporated into this final set.

Specific tests and procedures have not been included but will be determined by the particular needs of the district.

In addition, a caseload size range has been included. This range suggests factors that are to be considered when dealing with determining caseload size and should be utilized in conjunction with the eligibility criteria.

This material should be of value to you in your district. Any questions regarding this document should be referred to Barbara Gantwerk, Project Manager, Bureau of Policy and Planning, at (609) 292-0147.

Attachments

I. CRITERIA FOR STUTTERING

A pupil will be considered to have a stuttering disorder if:

1. The pupil demonstrates at least a mild rating, or its equivalent, on a formal fluency rating scale

OR

2. In a representative speech sample, the pupil exhibits moments of stuttering on 5 percent or more of the words spoken

AND

3. The speech-language specialist and two others (e.g., pupil, parent, school personnel) observe that the pupil's speech is significantly different from that of peers. At the secondary level, observation of these differences by the speech-language specialist and the pupil is sufficient.

.....

Either 1 or 2 must be present.

3 must always be present.

II. CRITERIA FOR VOICE

A pupil will be considered as having a voice disorder if:

1. The pupil exhibits abnormal voice quality, pitch, resonance, loudness or duration

AND

2. The condition is evident on two separate occasions, two weeks apart, at different times of day

AND

3. There are no medical contraindications to therapy*

AND

4. The speech-language specialist and two others (e.g., pupil, parent, school personnel) observe that the pupil's voice is significantly different from that of peers. At the secondary level, observation of differences by the speech-language specialist and the pupil is sufficient.

.....

All 4 criteria must be present.

*A school physician may determine this or a decision may be made to refer the pupil for a special examination.

III. CRITERIA FOR ARTICULATION

A pupil will be considered as having an articulation disorder if:

1.A. The pupil exhibits one or more errors of sound production beyond the age at which 90% of the population has achieved mastery (according to developmental norms)

OR

1.B. Performance on a standardized articulation test falls at least 1.5 standard deviations below the mean

AND

2. The pupil misarticulates sounds consistently in a representative speech sample

AND

3. The pupil is under age eight and is not stimulable on the error(s) sounds*

AND

4. The articulation errors cannot be attributed to dialectal or cultural differences or the influence of a foreign language

AND

5. The speech-language specialist and two others (e.g., pupil, parent, school personnel) observe that the pupil's speech is significantly different from that of peers. At the secondary level, observation by the speech-language specialist and the pupil is sufficient.

.....

Either 1.A or 1.B must be present.
2, 3, 4 and 5 must always be present.

*If over age eight, stimulability does not have to be considered in the enrollment decision.

IV. CRITERIA FOR LANGUAGE

A pupil will be considered as having a language disorder if:

1. The pupil uses morphological, syntactic, semantic or pragmatic patterns that fall below or are different from what would be expected given chronological age, developmental or cognitive level

AND

are evidenced during a representative oral language sample of at least five minutes or a minimum of 50 utterances

AND

2. Performance falls below 1.5 standard deviations, or below the 10th percentile, on at least two standardized measures related to the problems identified in the language sample. (When standardized instruments are appropriate)

AND

3. The language patterns cannot be attributed to dialectal or cultural differences or the influence of a foreign language

AND

4. The speech-language specialist and two others (e.g., pupil, parent, school personnel) observe that the pupil's language is significantly different from that of peers. At the secondary level, observation of differences by the speech-language specialist and the pupil is sufficient.

.....

1, 3 and 4 must always be present.

2 must be present when appropriate.

V. CASELOAD SIZE CONTINUUM

When these criteria have been used to determine pupil eligibility for speech and language services, the following caseload guidelines are recommended.

These guidelines have been developed with the expectation that the size of caseloads will vary from school district to school district as well as within districts, and no one number represents the size of an ideal caseload. The recommended continuum suggests the factors that should be considered in developing appropriate caseloads. It would be expected that the more severely involved team classified pupils will require more intensive services than those with milder speech or language disorders. Thus, the size of a caseload with the majority of pupils classified "Eligible for Speech Correction Services" will be in the upper range while a caseload with primarily team classified pupils with severe problems will be in the lower range.

In addition, it is assumed that an important aspect of the speech-language specialist's role is that of evaluation, program planning, and consultation regarding pupils with speech and language disorders and that time must be available to complete these tasks.

RECOMMENDED CASELOAD CONTINUUM

Ranges and Characteristics

Up to 25 ..... Up to 60

Most pupils have:	Most pupils have:
1) Classifications of Communication Handicapped or other classifications by full child study team	1) Classifications of Eligible for Speech Correction Services
2) Other handicapping condition(s) in addition to the speech and language disorder	2) Speech and language disorder only with no other educationally handicapping condition
3) Performance on standardized measure(s) of speech and language falls in the severe range (more than 2 SD below the mean)	3) Performance on standardized measure(s) falls in the mild to moderate range 1 to 2 SDs below the mean

Caseloads will vary along this continuum depending on the nature and severity of the speech and language disorders and the other handicapping conditions. Caseloads with a greater proportion of severely impaired pupils will be at the lower end of the continuum than those with pupils who have milder impairments.

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